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ABSTRACT

This module outlines the elements of a four-week course designed to instruct preservice education students in student discipline and in the prevention of disruptive behavior in school. The following topics are recommended for the course: (1) the need for a student discipline module and the causes of disruptive behavior; (2) school rules and regulations; (3) ways to deal with misbehavior; (4) effective rewards; (5) reality therapy; (6) alternative behavior programs; (7) modifying the curriculum; (8) increasing student involvement; (9) supportive relationships between teachers; (10) community/parent involvement; (11) the school administrator's role; (12) teacher-student interactions to reduce discipline problems; and (13) suggested activities for school personnel, students, and parents to reduce crime and disruptive behavior in the schools. (JD)

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CRIME AND DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

A MODULE OF INSTRUCTION FOR COLLEGES OF EDUCATION

IN THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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J. KELLY NIX

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STATE OF LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

J. KELLY NIX
State Superintendent

P. O. Box 44064
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January 9, 1980

Dear Professor:

The Louisiana Legislature passed Act 565 (1979) in the recent legislative session. This law requires:

> "That the program shall include instruction in child discipline and the prevention of disruptive behavior in schools."

If a prospective teacher wishes to qualify for a valid Louisiana teaching certificate, he or she must be given instruction according to the legislation noted above.

The following module is a mini-unit of instruction developed by a writing committee composed of College of Education deans, teachers throughout the State, and State Department of Education personnel. The material presented in this module is structured in such a manner as to allow comprehensive coverage of a complex subject within the existing curriculums of our colleges and universities. The module is designed to assist the college instructor to meet the mandates of the law, while preserving the flexibility and integrity of the university learning environment.

It is the genuine hope of the committee and our colleagues in the field of education that this module will assist you in implementing the mandates of Act 565.

Sincerely,

J. Kelly Nix

J. KELLY NIX

JKN:dmn

Part One

A Basic Premise

A basic premise around which this module is built is that the aims of education and classroom discipline must be campatible--i.e., to help youth to be self-directing and to assume responsibility for their actions.

Most of the leading practitioners in the field of discipline--including Glasser (Reality Therapy, Schools Without Failure); Clarizio (Toward Positive Classroom Discipline); Howard (School Discipline Desk Book); Tanner (Classroom Discipline); and Simon (Values Clarification), to name but a very few - have outlined various approaches in keeping with the above premise. Though their approaches vary, these authors have identified components which, if implemented in a school's educational program, would virtually ensure students' assuming a large measure of the responsibility for their own behavior. Basically these approaches have induced the creation of an educational environment wherein:

1 - overall school and individual classroom rules are lucid, concise, and enforceable;

2 - teachers and administrators use a variety of techniques to deal with misbehavior, in short:

   a - the behavior determines the technique,

   b - students are provided with options, and

   c - no one method is used to deal with all forms of misbehavior;

3 - teachers are well acquainted professionally and socially and feel comfortable helping one another with educational problems;

4 - parents in the community work with the school personnel in helping to build responsible behavior in students;

5 - the school administration provides effective leadership in formulating some basic definitions of the words discipline, punishment, and responsible behavior; and inducing the agreement and adherence to these definitions by the school community; and

6 - teachers and students enjoy sharing experiences on the school campus and away from school (school sponsored activities).

This brief synthesis represents, in the opinion of classroom teachers, colleges and universities, and the Department of Education, a solid foundation upon which to build a discipline module. As the reader will soon notice, the suggested modular topics which are included on the following pages (with the exception of those for the final week), correspond very closely to the six points which constitute an educational environment conducive to the development of self-directing behavior.

Part Two

The Module

This module is designed to be completed within four weeks, three hours per week.

First Week — Recommended Topics

Lesson No. 1

1 - During the beginning of the first hour the instructor should introduce the module and present each student with a syllabus which should include an outline of the subject material to be covered, objectives, activities and some plan for module evaluation.

a - Brief history of disciplinary problems in the schools

b - Operational definition of the term discipline for the purposes of this module

2 - Why the need for a student discipline module?

a - Gallup Polls,

b - suspension/expulsion data from School Suspensions: Are They Helping Children? and Children Out of School in America which give such data from a national perspective. Both publications are available through the Children's Defense Fund, 1520 New Hampshire Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20036, telephone number (202) 483-1470, and

c - statewide suspension/expulsion data from the Student Discipline Program, Louisiana State Department of Education.

3 - The causes of disruptive behavior--the theory segment of the module. Because the emphasis during this module should be given to practical suggestions on preventing and dealing with discipline problems, such theory might be discussed during the first hour.

First Week cont. Recommended Topics

Lesson No. 2 1 - School rules and regulations:

a - Definitions of rules and regulations for purposes of this module

b - Good rules have three properties: they are definable, reasonable, and enforceable.

c - Good rules should involve student participation in their formulation.

d - Rules should be clear and concise.

e - A classroom should have as few rules as possible (six is a workable number).

f - Rules should be phrased in a positive way.

g - When a rule is frequently broken, everyone's attention should be focused on the rule in question.

h - Rules should be posted in a conspicuous place.

i - Rules should be reviewed and updated periodically.

j - All rules must be enforced.

2 - Student rights under the law. (To be researched and presented by the instructor so that students can be made aware of their rights.)

a - Rights of due process

b - Rights of privacy

c - Rights of search and seizure

d - Recent court decisions

Lesson No. 3 1 - Ways to deal with misbehavior:

a - Effective use of rewards

b - Positive decision-making

First Week cont. — Recommended Topics

Lesson No. 3 cont.

c - Reality Therapy

d - Alternative behavior programs--their design, implementation, staffing, strengths, weaknesses

(1) the all-day, in-school suspension program

(2) the after-school behavior clinic

e - Peer influence

f - Grandma's law - "work before play"

g - Modifying the curriculum

(1) mini-courses

(2) outdoor educational experiences

(3) independent study programs

(4) alternative learning environments

h - Increase student involvement in school's activity programs and expand and modify school social programs

Second Week

Lesson No. 4 — Continue topics from Hour No. 3

Lesson No. 5 — Continue topics from Hour No. 3

Lesson No. 6 — 1 - Teachers helping one another:

a - Their effective use of the school's administration

b - Guidance Counselor

c - "Buddy system" - each teacher with a colleague to work through difficult problems

d - "Trouble shooting" team for systematic planning and problem solving

Second Week cont. — Recommended Topics

Lesson No. 6 cont.

e - The teachers' lounge syndrome - what to say and what not to say

Third Week

Lesson No. 7 — Community/parental involvement as a deterrent to discipline problems

a - Parent/teacher conferences with shift in emphasis from reporting to planning

b - Parental participation in classrooms

c - Working with the reluctant parent

(1) group visits

(2) field trips

(3) the parent/teacher breakfast

Lesson No. 8 — The School Administrator's role in positive discipline management

a - The principal as the key person in determining how satisfying the teachers' and students' experiences at school will be

b - The principal establishes a reward system by positive contacts with teachers, students and their parents

(1) personal notes and formal letters of recognition

(2) classroom visits

(3) intercom

(4) newsletter

(5) the principal as training coordinator

(6) involving staff in planning sessions

Third Week cont. — Recommended Topics

Lesson No. 9 — Teacher/Student Interactions to reduce discipline problems

a - "Rap" sessions where students and teachers discuss ways to improve their relationships

b - Working with students in planning and maintaining classroom arrangements

(1) physical environment

(2) learning centers

c - Students vs. teachers in athletic contests

d - Informal class discussions between teachers and students conducted in a respectful, non-judgmental manner

e - Suggestion box

f - Students/teachers from one class visiting other classes

g - Student/teacher school-wide clean-up days

h - Teachers eating lunch with their students

i - The use of creative dramatics and role playing activities

j - Teacher and class writing notes to students who are ill

Fourth Week

Lesson No. 10 — The school personnel will formulate a plan to conduct a campaign against crime and violence in the schools

a - Developing a Plan of Action

(1) defining the objectives of the plan

(2) outlining activities

(3) evaluating the objectives of the plan

(4) budgeting

(5) planning assignments: who will do what, where, and when

Fourth Week cont.	Recommended Topics
Lessons No. 11 and 12	Suggestions for activities for school personnel, students and parents to reduce crime and disruptive behavior in the schools

a - Establishing student security advisory committee

b - Beefing up building security

c - Adapting the physical plant to make the school complex less susceptible to vandalism

(1) encouraging students to beautify school with murals

(2) sponsoring clean-up, fix-up days involving students/teachers/parents

(3) having tree planting days

d - Establishing a "Parents on Patrol" program

e - Developing a conflict resolution program

f - Implementing a financial incentive program

g - Emphasizing activities planned to develop self-responsibility in students

OBJECTIVE - EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE MODULE

1. Prospective teachers will be presented with practical skills that can be used in the schools to ensure the establishment of the environment described in the basic premise of this prospectus. Skills taught will be those that can be taken to the classroom and used effectively.
2. Prospective teachers will be taught a minimum of two alternative methods for dealing with classroom disruptions.
3. Prospective teachers will be taught how to successfully encourage parental involvement in building responsible behavior in students.
4. Prospective teachers will be given information dealing with common causes of school misbehavior.
5. Prospective teachers will learn how to enlist the community in the cause of good student discipline.
6. Prospective teachers will be given guidelines to follow when formulating or evaluating classroom/school rules and regulations.
7. Prospective teachers will be given information and guidelines on the selection and implementation of alternatives to suspension.
8. Prospective teachers will learn the key role the principal plays in maintaining good discipline at his/her school.
9. Prospective teachers will learn the ways to involve all students in school programs.

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